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Buchanan Drama Club to perform 'The Addams Family' Saturday

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — Buchanan Community Schools students are preparing for their first musical performance of 2025.

The Buchanan High School Drama Club will be performing "The Addams Family Musical" in the BHS Auditorium at 7 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are $8 for students and $10 for adults.

The musical, written by Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice, is based on Charles Addams's original New Yorker cartoon, which has inspired several movie and television adaptations.

"This is the first musical the high school has done in a while so when I was picking the show I was really looking for something that I thought the students and community would have fun with," said Co-Director Katie Persak. "The characters of this show really fit the students we have in our program this year and it's a great show for us as we continue to grow."

Directed by Persak and Kim Oleson, Buchanan students will depict the familiar characters Gomez, Morticia, Fester, Wednesday, Pugsley, Lurch and more as Wednesday falls in love with a "normal" young man.

"This musical includes all the favorite characters of the family, some Addams family ancestors from beyond the grave, and a few new characters who get to meet the family for the first time," Persak said. "I think that people who are fans of all of the movies and tv shows will really like this new story about Wednesday growing up and falling in love and how the family comes together to handle it."

Persak said the students quickly embraced the show.

"I tried to keep it a secret from them as long as I could so when I finally announced the show I they seemed very excited for it," she said. "I think that excitement really shows in how well they've prepared their characters."

In total, approximately 30 cast, crew

See DRAMA, Page A8

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

NEW HOME, SAME MISSION

Salvation Army hosts dedication ceremony for Ed French Corps Community Center

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES CHARTER TOWNSHIP — The Salvation Army of Niles will soon be able to better serve neighbors in need in Southeast Berrien and Cass Counties.

Local officials and community members gathered Thursday for the ribbon cutting and dedication of the new Salvation Army Ed French Corps Community Center, located at 1707 Miller Dr. in Niles Charter Township.

The new building includes a commercial kitchen to use for their hot lunch program, a client-choice food pantry, a dining room for meals with fellowship and flexible spaces that foster education and can host multiple community venues, a community vegetable garden, warehouse storage for large donations, administration and social services offices and a chapel for prayer

See MISSION, Page A8

MAXWELL HARDEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS
Local officials and community members gathered Thursday for the ribbon cutting and dedication of the new Salvation Army Ed French Corps Community Center.

Edwardsburg Planning Commission talks ORVs, possible development project

By JUSTIN FLAGEL
Leader Publications Contributor

EDWARDSBURG — Off road vehicles and a possible new development were the main discussion at the Edwardsburg Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday.

A possible Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Ordinance was brought to the table after a recent request from a resident, who was not present at the meeting. Chairman Gordon Carr brought research to the discussion, noting that ORVs are not permitted on state or federal roadways without special approval, leaving the Commission's scope limited to village streets. It was also noted that ORVs qualify as a specific type of vehicle, explaining the separate rules for vehicles such as golf carts and snowmobiles.

Sam Garwood suggested that the topic may need to be split into two items, with the village deciding whether they wish to pursue an ordinance allowing ORVs on local streets and, if so, then pursuing what would be required for allowance on state roads. Garwood noted the possible benefits to local businesses via increased traffic from ORV users, while wanting to ensure the vehicles did not create a nuisance.

The commission chose to table the issue for now, with an interest in continuing research and possibly speaking to local law enforcement and those interested in using ORVs before taking further action.

The commission also heard an initial proposal from Dyllan Micheal Design Construction, Inc. regarding a possible new development providing business and residential spaces. The proposed build would take place in two lots at the corners of Davis Street and Elkhart Road, and Elkhart Road and M-62, across from Taco Bell. Details were minimal, as Micheal Holt, President of Dyllan Micheal, explained that he was first seeking general feedback from the commission before further pursuing the project.

"The last thing we want to do is to build in an area where no one wants us to build," said Holt.

Holt described the project as an approximately $3 million investment, creating a 10,000 square foot building for mixed use, with apartments upstairs and businesses downstairs. Dyllan Micheal has not created detailed design plans, but expressed a desire for "upper end" apartments and a property emphasizing safety, accessibility and walkability.

Garwood clarified that it would be inappropriate for the commission to make a decision based on the type of apartments or qualifications of tenants, emphasizing the requirement of non-discrimination. He also noted that the concept of refreshing the area would be a positive for Edwardsburg.

With few details to go on, the commission invited Holt to bring more details and plans as the project progressed.

The next Edwardsburg Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 15 in the village hall.

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In the robo zone

Ladies Auxiliary makes donation to local youth robotics team

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — A local organization is doing its part to help a middle school robotics team compete against the world's best.

Representatives from the Dowagiac Eagles Ladies Auxiliary were on hand Wednesday to present a check for $200 to Robo Tech Zone's Ting Tang Walla Walla Bing Bang robotics team at the Eagles, 101 E Railroad St, Dowagiac. The funds will be used to help pay for the team's trip to compete in the VEX Robotics World Championship, which will take place May 6 through 14 in Dallas, Texas. The Robotics Education and Competition Foundation manages the VEX Robotics Competition, which thousands of schools participate in around the world each year.

"We think it's awesome," said Ladies Auxiliary Secretary Dana Walker. "The reason we did this is because we want people to be aware of what these kids are doing because they

See ROBO, Page A8

MAXWELL HARDEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS
Representatives from the Dowagiac Eagles Ladies Auxiliary were on hand Wednesday to present a check for $200 to Robo Tech Zone's Ting Tang Walla Walla Bing Bang robotics team at the Eagles, 101 E Railroad St, Dowagiac.

OBITUARIES

Bobby Gene Smith Morrison
Matthew Dale DePue
Elizabeth Fleenor
Carolyn Sue Woods
Joan M. Ogrin
David E. Hodges
Warren "Zeke" Donald Hand
Beverly Sue Stasiak
Barbara Fisher
Elijah L. Harris, Sr.
Mack Velthouse
Peter Karl Wienke
A6

FRANKLY
TIPS, QUIPS, AND BLIPS

"Spring came and went, but it came again and then left again. However, there is a rumor it is planning a triumphant return. ."

A2

A fight to the end B1

FRANKLY

TIPS, QUIPS, AND BLIPS

What is Frankly? It is where readers sound off on issues of the day. Have a tip, quip or blip? Call or text Frankly at 219-455-2349 or email rich.cains@leaderpub.com

The Dow Jones drop simply means it's time to buy now. This is when substantial gains will be made in your portfolio. Buy cheap now!

Trump is brilliant. He is leveraging a great economy. It's starting to work and he is making other nations stop taking advantage of the US.

Eggs this, eggs that... I'm so sick of hearing all of the egg news. Fake shortages. Egg producer Cal-Maine Foods has seen profits surge at 718% last quarter. Wow! An epic egg shortage seems like it was manufactured. Wait for a beef "shortage" now.

One month of no smoking for me. It can be done. Thank God my husband has been helping me stay off of them. I feel so much better after just one month.

Never take FREEDOM of SPEECH for granted. We are seeing Americans being deported for speaking their minds. One's opinions should not get you booted out of the country. That's what other countries do, not the US. Read your constitution.

Get involved in a local organization that helps the homeless. Or, maybe help by giving someone on the street a blanket or $10. NOBODY growing up ever said to himself I want to have nothing when I get older. NOBODY ever said I want to spend my days wandering around without friends or family. NOBODY ever said I like being kicked out of a business for lottering when it's raining outside.

Spring came and went, but it came again and then left again. However, there is a rumor it is planning a triumphant return.

WEATHER

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
40% Chance Frozen Mix	Rain Showers	40% Chance Frozen Mix	Partly Cloudy	40% Chance Snow Showers	Partly Cloudy
40° 31°	53° 36°	43° 30°	48° 34°	49° 33°	47° 31°

SMC HOSTS ANNUAL CAREER FAIR

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — One local college was buzzing with career opportunities this week.

Southwestern Michigan College hosted its inaugural Career Fair Wednesday at the 1st Source Bank Fieldhouse on the Dowagiac campus.

Open to the community as well as SMC students, the fair gave participants the chance to meet and interact with more than 40 companies about career and internship opportunities across a variety of fields, including agriculture, automotive, financial, health care, manufacturing, public service and telecommunications.

"We have a really good mix of employers and companies that came from different industries," said SMC Career Development Manager Melinda Stockwell. "We were excited to offer that for our students that are looking for internships and for those full-time career positions. I'm just excited to connect the community to local employers as well as some national employers that are here."

Stockwell said the college has enjoyed preparing for

See FAIR, Page A7

MAXWELL HARDEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

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Edwardsburg village council approves budget

By JUSTIN FLAGEL
Leader Publications Contributor

EDWARDSBURG — The Edwardsburg Village Council approved their 2025-2026 proposed budget, as well as the budget amendments for March and the audit for 2025 at their regular monthly meeting on Monday.

The budget was approved after a public hearing the same evening. Village President Dennis Peak thanked the staff for their contribution to the final product.

"You guys do all of the hard work," said Peak.

The required audit was approved for a cost not to exceed $9,250 to the Siegfried Crandall accounting firm.

Village trustees also approved the purchase of new software for the village hall, a required replacement due to the end of support for the current software. The new software, at a cost of $54,125, will be implemented later this year. The Cemetery Board is researching a related Geographic Information System software that would assist in the finding of information about and the location of plots.

Full time village employees will see at least a dollar an hour increase in their pay starting on April 1st, coinciding with the new budget. Along with the pay change, the council returned the treasurer position from salary to hourly, matching current village needs. They also voted to hire a new Department of Public Works employee to replace a recent vacancy.

The Department of Public Works reported the new water filtration system has removed 98 to 100 percent of iron and 96 percent of magnesium. The plant will also reduce the frequency of tower cleanings, currently required every ten months, to a camera inspection every five years and a cleaning every ten years. A spring flush will take place in April.

They are also researching possible changes to the chlorination process to solve ongoing problems. Current methods require a separate system and the use of pumps that are often scarce and difficult to replace. A change to newer technology that is integrated with the filtration system would cost the village $55,000. The council acknowledged that the expense would save money in the long term and keep the system operational, but requested research for other options before approving it.

President Peak reported that the new Elkhart Road path had been approved by Ontwa Township, at no cost to the village. Edwardsburg may need to move some water infrastructure to accommodate the new path.

The police board reported that new vehicle cameras and body cameras have been installed. A new police union contract was also approved through 2028, pending approval by the union.

The Street board reported that there are plans to pave Gateway Road this year. Crews will begin filling holes in the roads once asphalt is available.

They also reported that a desired sidewalk in front of the new library location would have to be completed by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) due to regulatory requirements. Public Works Coordinator Rich Low is keeping in contact with MDOT to assure the work is completed.

The next regular board meeting will take place at 6 p.m. Monday, April 21. The village hall will be closed Friday, April 18 for Good Friday.

Village of Vandalia
Budget meeting
March 31st 6pm

SMCAS, Medic 1 discuss potential merger

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications Contributor

BERRIEN SPRINGS — People got the chance to learn more about a possible merger between the county's two main ambulance services at a community meeting Thursday in Berrien Springs.

Thursday's meeting at the Berrien Springs-Oronoko Township Public Safety Building was the second of its kind on the topic. The first of the community meetings was held in late February at the Berrien County Health Department building in Benton Harbor.

The proposed merger would bring Medic 1 and the Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Service together in one service. Medic 1 serves much of central and northern Berrien County as well as the New Buffalo area. SMCAS is based in the Niles area and serves southeastern Berrien County as well as much of Cass County.

Both entities date back to the 1970s and were at the forefront of emergency medical services at the time, bringing advanced life support services to the area. The merger would have to be approved by all the municipal owners of the two services before becoming a reality, with the new entity called Southwest Michigan Mobile Health Care.

SMCAS Executive Director Brian Scribner and Medic 1 Executive Director Jason Wiley outlined the reasons why they're considering the merger and what the next steps are. They're hoping to hire a consultant in coming months to study the feasibility of making such a move.

Scribner said the problems Medic 1 and SMCAS are facing aren't unique to the two services but are being felt by services around the state and around the country. Problems he mentioned included staffing shortages, recruitment and retention and funding issues.

He said the current operating model with people working 24 hour shifts is not conducive to employee health. He noted that the current system is outdated, not only in the hours paramedics work but also in sending advanced life support (ALS) paramedics to all calls even when they're not needed.

"It's a matter of letting go of an outdated mindset," he said. "Now we send 100 percent ALS paramedics when they're only needed 20 percent of the time. Overall, only three to six percent of responses require a critical intervention … We have coverage all day and we're either overstaffed or don't have enough staff.

He and Wiley described the proposed new operating model merging the two services as one using "dynamic staffing" that would give better coverage with less staff. Wiley noted that merging would allow them to expand their coverage area and more resources, opportunities and capabilities.

Wiley said that there's a shortage of 2,000 paramedics in Michigan and both Medic 1 and SMCAS have felt that shortage. "This would bring a more efficient use of resources and help us implement best practices and deploy people when and where they're needed," he said. "We would have paramedics in s.u.v. mobile units around the county to respond."

He spoke of "myths" and "half truths" they wanted to dispel. He said the services are not looking to take over the other and will not be downgrading what they offer. "One myth is that we are downgrading our services and that's not true, there will actually be a significant upgrade," he said.

He argued that having fewer paramedics would actually result in better care. He said that paramedics now have less opportunities to use and hone their skills when they're sitting around most of the day and not out on calls.

Another aspect of the new model is being able to bring health care to people in the community. "We can partner with Corewell to check on patients who have been released from the hospital and save the hospital from the financial penalties that come when people are re-admitted within 30 days of release."

Wiley said after the meeting that there are no plans to close down the SMCAS base outside of Niles or other "substations" in rural parts of Berrien and Cass Counties. He said in fact that they hope to add a substation in the Berrien Springs area to better serve the central county.

When asked about how the decision is made to sent a basic or advanced life support crew to a call, he said that 9-1-1 dispatch analyzes the situation when a call comes in. The dispatcher determines if it is a medical issue and then follows a protocol to determine whether a basic or advanced life support response is needed.

"We're not really changing what we've promised to provide," Wiley emphasized. "We will provide advanced life support when it's needed and we will be more efficient in what we do."

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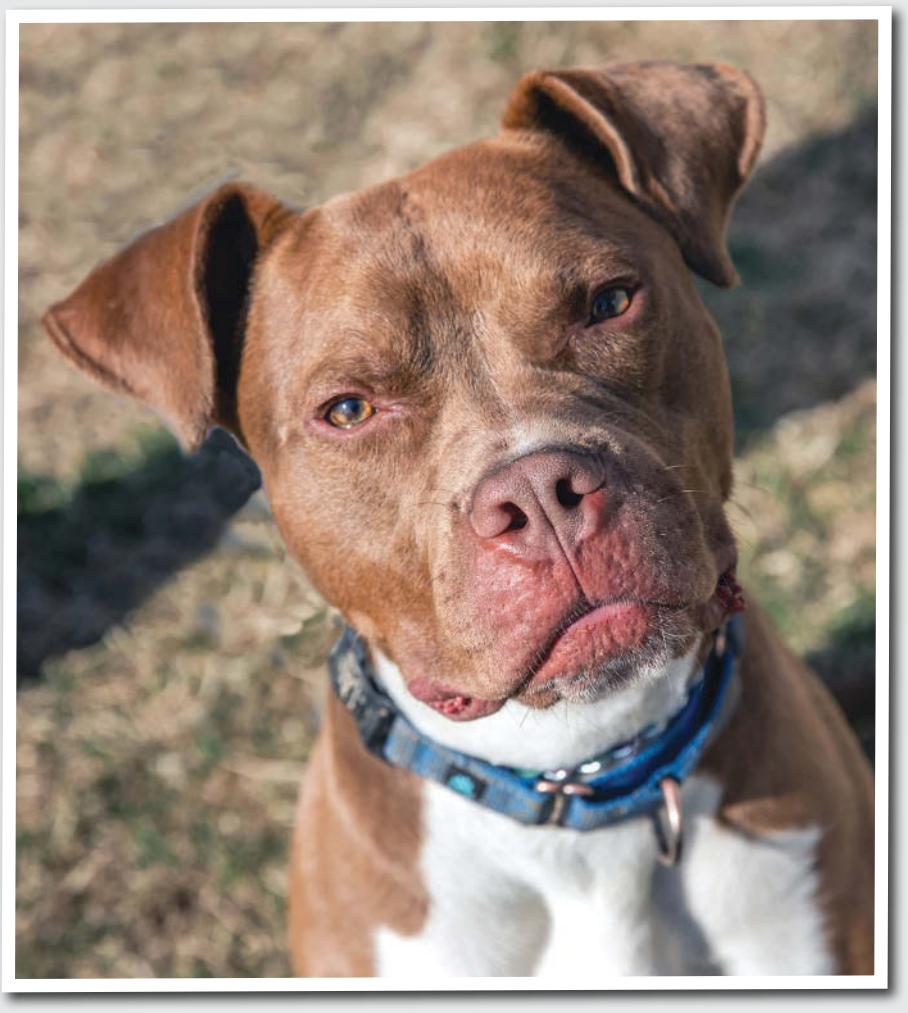
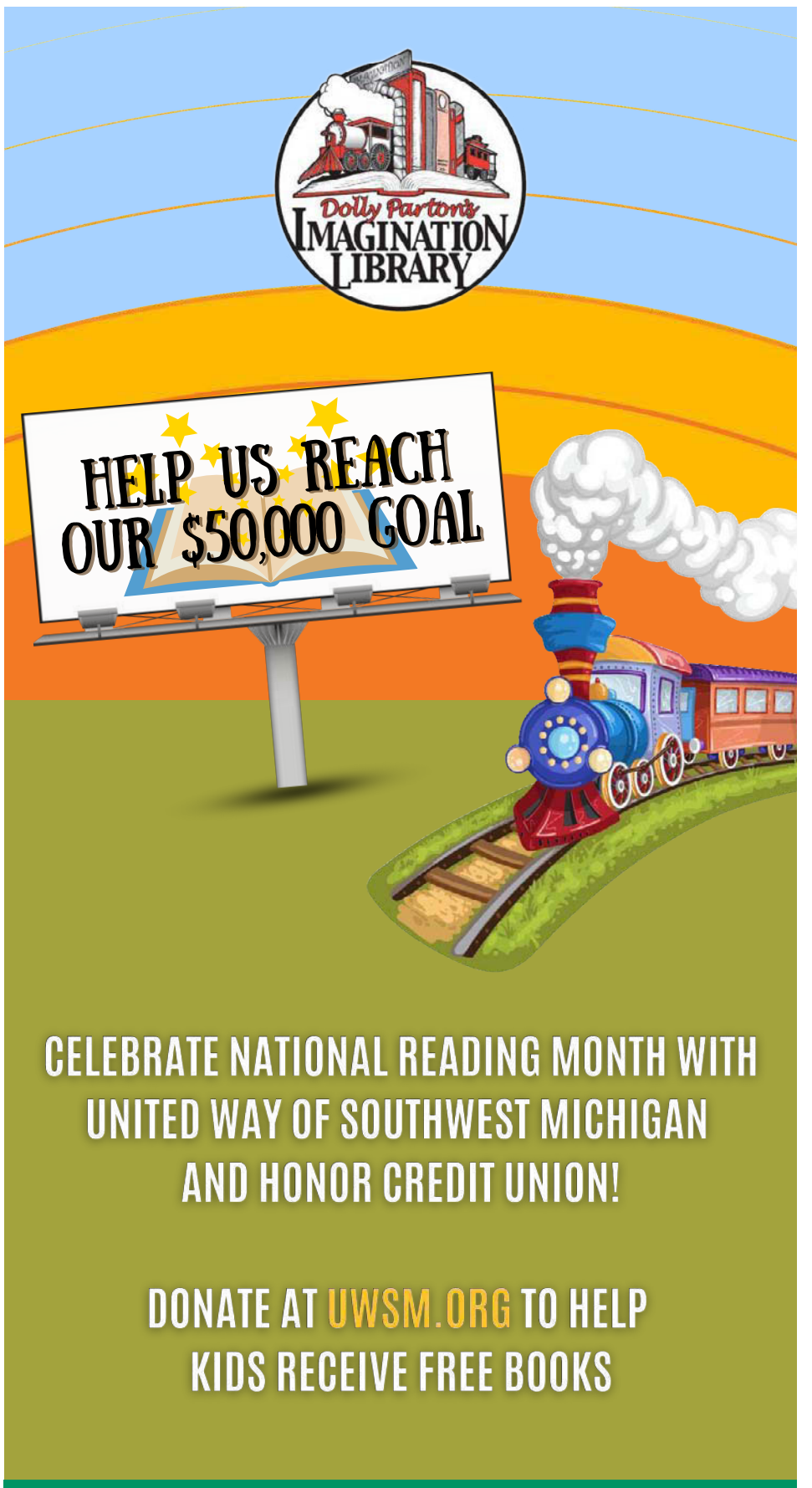
PET OF THE WEEK



Mr. Piggy is described by volunteers as a sweetheart with a serious love for treats. He's silly at times, cute all the time with his Boxer-like nose and attentive eyes. Mr. Piggy enjoys treats and tummy rubs, is a pro at flopping on his back and is ready for all the gentle pets you offer. Ready to chase a ball or play with a canine friend, Mr. Piggy is ready to share his love and receive endless treats and affection from you. He is two years old, neutered and current on shots. Contact Berrien County Animal Services at (269) 927-5648.



Opinion

Spring Cleaning: Not Just Your Home, But Your Mind

When we think of spring cleaning, we often picture the house being torn apart: curtains being washed, baseboards scrubbed, the attic organized, and a two-stall garage decluttered—one that, at this point, can barely fit a car. It's that time to clean everything in sight to prepare for the upcoming summer season, with all the family gatherings, parties, game nights, and after-school activities. But we often forget that spring cleaning isn't just for our homes—it's also an opportunity to clean and declutter our minds.

Turnock

I know what you might be thinking: "Josh, how do I clean my brain? I can't exactly mop it." Well, you can clean your mind, just in a different way. Don't worry, I'm not suggesting you start mopping your head.

A few weeks ago, I wrote about the importance of a calm morning routine—not rushing to get out the door. If revamping your morning routine is how you choose to spring clean your mental space, that's a great place to start. It gives you a chance to assess what you're doing and identify what may be causing stress. And stress, as we know, raises blood pressure, which can lead to bigger health issues. By simply taking longer to get ready, and allowing yourself to enjoy the quieter moments of your morning, you'll benefit in ways beyond just your mental health.

But your mental spring cleaning can extend beyond just mornings. Something new I'm starting for my own mental spring clean is a 30-Day Challenge. For 30 days, I'll focus on making one positive change in my life, big or small. Personally, as someone who works from home, I often forget to set aside time for a break. I find myself pushing through tasks, always looking for the next thing to do, even though I deserve a 15-30 minute break to clear my head and maybe take a walk.

What's your 30-Day Challenge going to be? Will it be to go to the gym each day or a few times a week? Maybe you'll start enjoying a cup of tea every evening before bed. Or, perhaps, you'll make a point to call someone you love each morning. Whatever it is, choose something that helps you relax, reflect, and become more in tune with yourself.

Lastly, take time this spring to re-evaluate your New Year's goals. Are you on track with them, or are they feeling out of reach? Here's the thing—your goals aren't set in stone. They aren't law. Let's use this season of renewal to reflect on them and decide if they need to be adjusted or even completely changed. If you need to modify your goal of going to the gym every day to three times a week, that's perfectly okay. The goal is to become a better version of yourself, and if that means doing less, so be it.

In the end, you're doing your best to improve yourself—and there's no reason to beat yourself up about it. Life is about trial and error. Sometimes we learn what we can handle, and that doesn't make us weak; it makes us stronger for recognizing our limits.

So, this spring, give yourself some grace. Be kind and loving toward yourself, and keep these thoughts in mind as you clean and declutter both your home and your mind.

Peace and love to you all.

Joshua Turnock is a Niles High School graduate and a valued member of Leader Publications' Design Team.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Trump's reckless tariffs are a severe threat to the U.S. economy

Editor,

In 1930, President Herbert Hoover signed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Bill, which raised American tariffs (taxes) on imports by the second-highest amount in U.S. history. This bill had disastrous consequences, when retaliatory tariffs strongly contributed to the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The US depression was long and gruelling and only subsided because of President Franklin Roosevelt's government jobs program, followed by rapid WWII economic build-up.

In Europe, the combination of retaliatory tariffs and WWI sanctions/reparations on Germany pushed the German people away from democracy, moving them to "Make Germany Great Again" under a dictator, Adolph Hitler, who named himself the savior of German recovery. Instead, Germany collapsed by the end of 1945.

Apparently, neither Trump nor his team have any historical perspective about why multiple large tariffs are not a sound tactic. No president since Hoover has been so incompetent as to put multiple large tariffs into practice.

Trump's destructive tariff actions against our largest trading partners (Canada, Mexico, and Europe) have spooked the U.S. stock market, leading to a dramatic down-turn. A recession is very much on the horizon.

Trump recently told a news commentator that the United States could go into recession but it's a price he's willing to pay to do a "big thing." The only big thing he is doing is creating enormous damage to the U.S. economy.

We all need to do our homework and stay connected with what's happening. As Trump's tariffs take effect, the cost of living is already beginning to increase. We will soon have to pay a lot more for basic products like food, housing, and transportation.

Please call your US Congressperson and Senators now and demand their intervention to stop the dangerous implementation of Trump's reckless tariffs that will only create higher US prices and market instability.

Ken Peterson
MAJ U.S. Army (Ret.)
Buchanan

NEWS

Niles woman gets prison time for child abuse

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications Contributor

NILES — A Niles woman was sentenced to prison Monday at the Niles courthouse for abusing her children.

Jackson

Angeleah Rose Jackson, 34, of Niles, pleaded no contest to two counts of third-degree child abuse and was sentenced to two concurrent terms of 17 months to two years in prison. She has credit for 74 days served and must pay $266 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Jan. 3 in Niles.

Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Myrene Koch said that Jackson is also the subject of an abuse and neglect case in family court. Koch said at least one of the children has sought and is getting counseling. She spoke of one child who was beaten, dragged by her hair and then had a tray thrown at her.

Defense attorney Daniel French objected to Koch's characterization of Jackson's behavior as sadism. He called it a matter of discipline going too far.

Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein agreed in part with Koch although he didn't think it rose to the level of sadism. "It was abuse and went beyond parental discipline," he said.

"In her description of the offense, she at first said she couldn't remember what happened and then said it had gotten out of hand," Koch said. "It was her responsibility and duty to take care of her children, not to beat them. In these types of cases, the guidelines can't fathom what the children went through."

In his comments before the sentencing, French said he's not sure if Jackson actually understands all that's going on. He said that the incident will change her and her children's lives forever, noting that the children are in foster care.

Judge Hosbein called the videos he saw of the incident "horrendous". "This was a terrible situation where the children were abused for who knows how long and they will be dealing with it for a lifetime," he said.

In another sentencing, an area resident was sentenced to prison for felony drunk driving.

Brian Christopher Meadows, 45, pleaded guilty to third offense drunk driving and was sentenced to 14 months to five years in prison. He has credit for 11 days already served and must pay $1,818 in fines and costs.

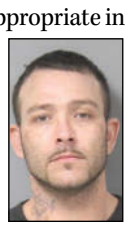
Meadows

The incident occurred Oct. 10, 2024 in Niles Township. His blood alcohol level was .09, just above the legal limit. It was actually his fifth conviction for drunk driving.

Defense attorney Shayne Williams said Meadows has a place to stay, recently got a job and has been going to counseling.

Meadows said he's "really trying to get my mind right." "I really, really can do this," he said relative to serving a probation sentence. "You will never see me in front of you again."

"I hope what you say is true," Judge Hosbein said. "You've had opportunities for rehabilitation before, I don't think it is appropriate in this instance."



Floyd

In two other cases, people received probation and credit for time served sentences.

Roy David Floyd, 38, pleaded guilty to malicious destruction of property under $200 and unlawful use of a motor vehicle and was sentenced to credit for two days served and $485 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Aug. 17, 2021 when he and another person took a van and spraypainted it.

Floyd had his probation revoked and given credit for time served from an earlier case.

Wentz

Russell Wentz, 45, of Niles, pleaded guilty to attempted carrying a concealed weapon and was sentenced to two years probation, credit for three days served and $598 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Sept. 17, 2024 in Niles.

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS
President Briegel with Tanya Cosey, April 28, 1994.

SMC grad finds success in hometown Dowagiac

COMMUNITY REPORT

DOWAGIAC — It's been 30 years since Tonya Cosey graduated from Southwestern Michigan College. As a "proud Chieftain," the 1988 Union High School graduate still calls Dowagiac home.

Cosey worked as an outpatient therapist for 22 years and is currently clinical supervisor for adult outpatient, adult case management, children's outpatient and adult peer support services for Cassopolis-based Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network.

She started attending SMC soon after graduating from DUHS.

"I had no idea what direction I wanted to go in as a first-generation high school graduate," she said. "I had no clue about the college process, nor did I have references of historical experiences within my family prior to graduating from high school. I just knew I wanted to go to college and become 'something.' "

Growing up in Dowagiac, "I found myself being the one a lot of my friends came to when they were experiencing problems, or just needing to talk," Cosey said. "I also held that same role within my family. Gravitating towards social work just seemed to be a natural fit for me.

"Working several years at the Berrien County Juvenile Center

See GRAD, Page A7

Niles Daily Star

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COMICS & PUZZLES

ADAM

DID YOU LEARN YOUR LESSON ABOUT TOO MUCH ENERGY DRINK?
YES. I'M STICKING WITH GOOD OLD COFFEE.
TRY "EDGY"! THE NEW SUPER-CAFFEINATED GUM FOR YOUR-
TWO CASES. NO, WAIT. IS THERE A DISCOUNT FOR THREE?
-ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

ALLEY OOP

READY TO GO THROUGH THE DANGEROUS, MURDEROUS, PERILOUS FOREST AGAIN?
I'VE NEVER BEEN READIER.
I GUESS IT HELPS THAT WE'VE TRAVELED THROUGH IT TWICE NOW. WE KNOW WHAT DANGERS TO EXPECT.
YEAH, NO DANGERS. SINCE ALLEY CLEARED A PATH TO TRIXIE'S COTTAGE.
I CAN MAKE IT WIDER IF YOU WANT!

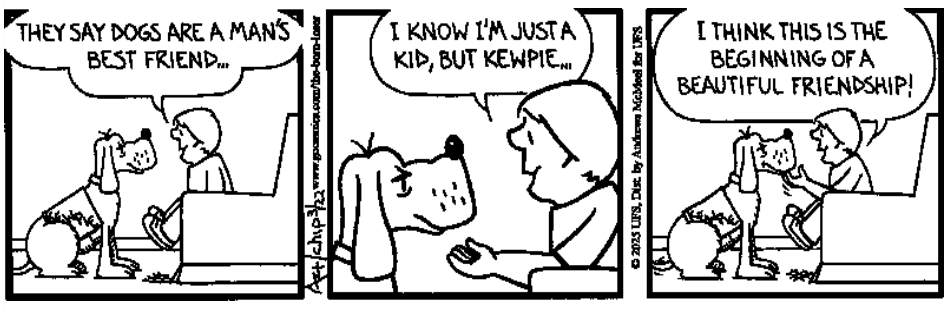
ARLO & JANIS

OH, REE YOU SILLY MAN! NO WAY WAS THAT A FOUL.
BUT I DON'T ENVY YOU. YOU'RE DOING THE BEST YOU CAN, AND WHAT DO YOU GET?
ABUSE!
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?
THE CALL WAS AGAINST THE OTHER TEAM.

BIG NATE

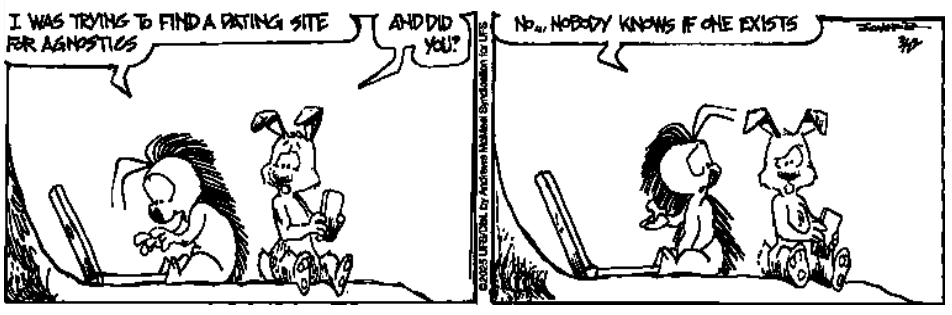
...AND I REALIZED THAT I'M LETTING NATE'S MESSY LOCKER TAKE UP WAY TOO MUCH SPACE IN MY HEAD!
WELL, HIS LOCKER IS PRETTY GROSS.
HA HA! I KNOW! HE'S THE WORST!
BUT HE'S ALSO THE BEST, YOU KNOW? NATE'S THE BEST!
FRANCIS, Y'KNOW HOW YOU LET ME BORROW YOUR PHONE?
JUST KIDDING. HE'S THE WORST.

BORN LOSER

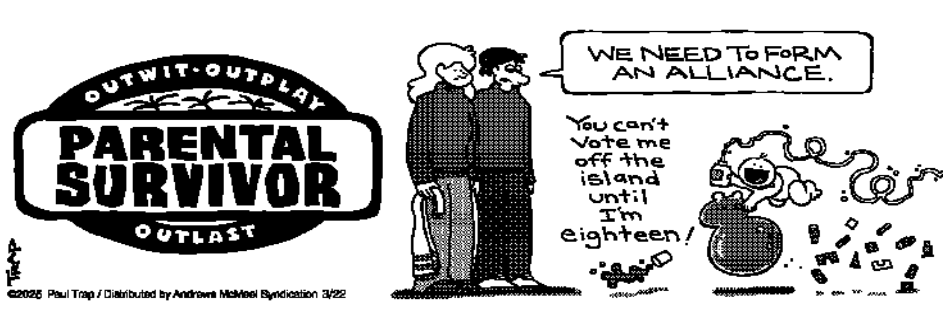


FRANK & ERNEST

GRIZZWELLS



THATABABY



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SODOKU PUZZLE

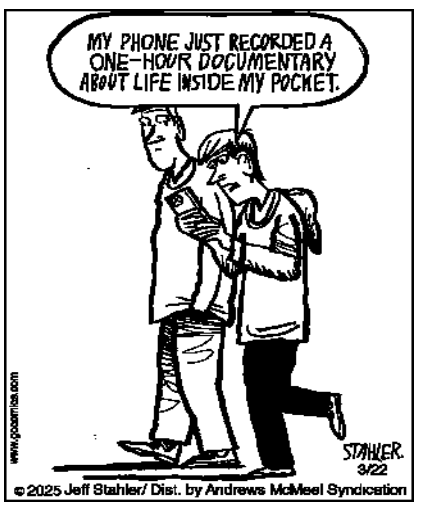
HOW TO PLAY: Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

DIFFICULTY RATING: 5/5

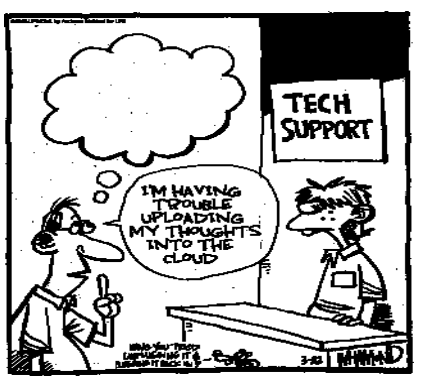
ANSWER ON PAGE 6

			2		1	4	9	
		3		9			8	
				6				
8					6			1
3				4				6
9			5					8
				2				
	9			8		1		
	1	2	9		5			

MODERATELY CONFUSED


MY PHONE JUST RECORDED A ONE-HOUR DOCUMENTARY ABOUT LIFE INSIDE MY POCKET.
STAHLER. 3/22
© 2025 Jeff Stahler/ Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication

REALITY CHECK

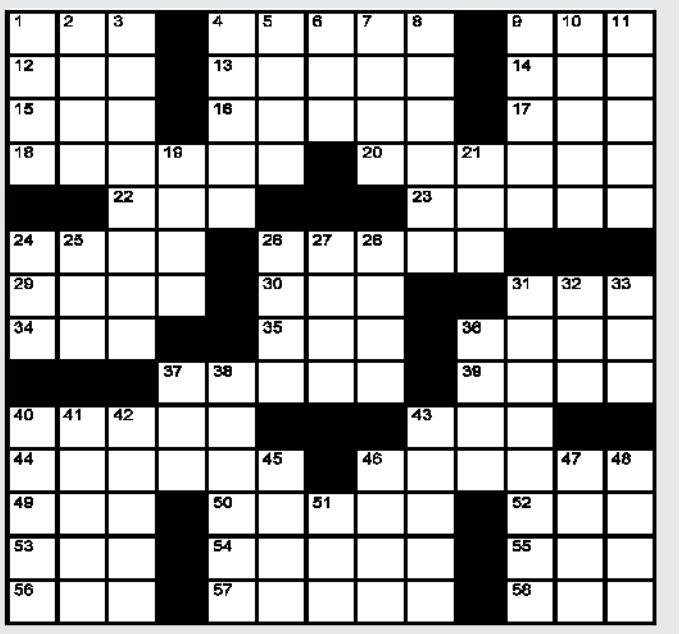


CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS
1 "Shake a —!"
4 — de menthe
9 Bat wood
12 Scull
13 Caesar, for one
14 Role in "The Matrix"
15 PreCheck org.
16 Musical work
17 Bite
18 Karate instructor
20 White fur
22 Downward movement
23 Cupidity
24 Not yet up
26 Cries like a donkey
29 Dissolute fellow
30 Lenient
31 — and away
34 Paving material
35 Cruet's contents
36 Threesome
37 Fish with hook and line
39 Grip
40 Old-fashioned
43 Gain
44 Set upon
46 Get a move on
49 By way of
50 Lukewarm
52 Frozen water
53 Antlered animal
54 Cell terminal
55 Directional suffix
56 Abbr. on maps
57 Caught a certain way
58 Actress — McClanahan

DOWN
1 Oodles
2 Facilitate
3 Magnificence
4 Go slowly
5 Flat bread
6 Big bird
7 Crafted
8 Vim
9 "— Get Your Gun"
10 Paris' river
11 Wished
19 Aspect
21 "— Doubtfire"
24 Museum contents
25 Anaconda
26 Online diary
27 Marsh bird
28 Wheel shaft
31 Undeveloped area
32 Trouble
33 Singer — Stewart
36 "— is the life!"
37 — — rule
38 Drink of the gods
40 Brick
41 Inclined
42 Dracula's undoing
43 Walked through water
45 Gambling game
46 Conceal
47 Neutral color
48 Hawaiian bird
51 Soda —

ANSWER ON PAGE 6



3-22

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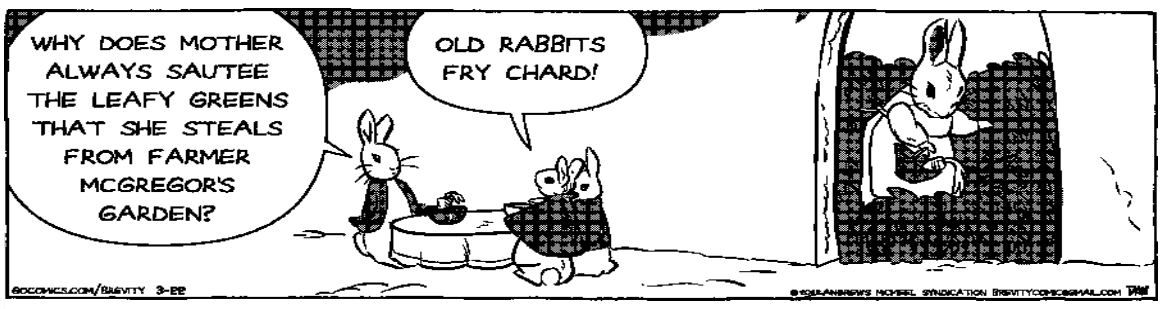
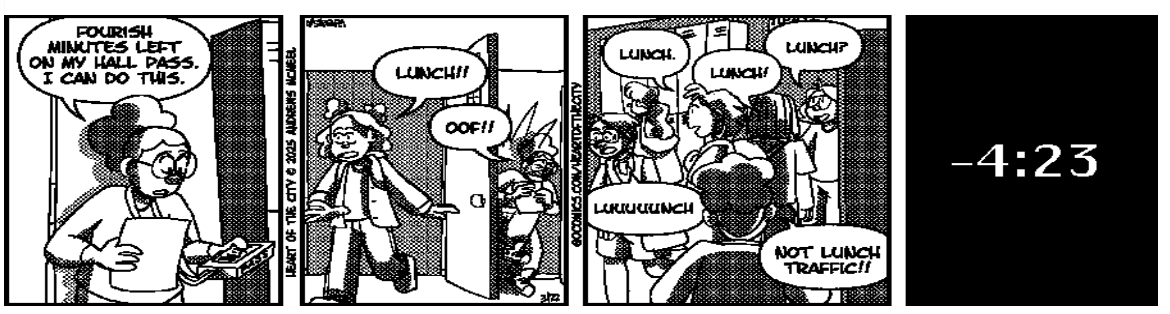
BREVITY



HEART OF THE CITY



DEATH NOTICES

Bobby Gene Smith Morrison, 81, passed away on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Matthew Dale DePue, 57, passed away on Thursday, March 13, 2025, in Edwardsburg, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Elizabeth Fleenor, 84, of Berrien Springs, passed away on Sunday, March 16, 2025. Arrangements have been entrusted to Allred Funeral Home in Berrien Springs. www.AllredFuneralHome.com

Carolyn Sue Woods, 83, passed away on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Joan M. Ogrin, 88, of Cassopolis, died Wednesday, March 19, 2025. Arrangements are pending at Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis.

David E. Hodges, 79, of Bloomfield Hills, died Monday, March 17, 2025. Arrangements are pending at Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis.

OBITUARIES

Warren "Zeke" Donald Hand

February 3, 1938 - March 12, 2025

Warren "Zeke" Donald Hand, 87, of Niles, died peacefully, Wednesday, March 12, 2025.

His life began February 3, 1938 in Sumnerville, the fourth of five children born to Pat and Tillie Hand. He married Rosa Rocha, November 10, 1962. She survives.

Zeke graduated from Niles High School in 1956. He served his country in the National Guard and Army Reserve from 1956 to 1962. Zeke helped his father run Hand's Gulf Service on Warren Road and M-51. He retired from the waste water treatment plant in Niles in 2000, serving the city of Niles for over twenty years. Zeke and Rosa enjoyed spending time riding their Harley together and with other couples. They could often be found at different riding events like hill climbs, poker runs and other events like ABATE. Together they also enjoyed attending baseball games, especially the Detroit Tigers. Zeke was also a U of M football fan and enjoyed golfing at Hampshire Country Club and other local clubs.

He will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by

his wife Rosa Hand; daughter, Tina (Nathan) Joossens of Edwardsburg; and a host of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; his siblings, Audrey Skelton, Jack Hand, Gerald "Chub" Hand and Judith Hand.

The family will observe a private remembrance.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Zeke be made to your local animal rescue.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritter-wickens.com.

Ask Us About Our Pre-Need Plans

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26863 W. Main Street, Edwardsburg, MI
269-663-5345
Paul E. Mayhew, Owner

ART SCHERER COUNTRY ESTATE

ESTATE FARM AUCTION

SATURDAY - MARCH 29 @ 10:00 A.M.

Located at 640 S. M-140 - Watervliet, MI
(South of I-94 or North of M-62 on M-140)

TRACTORS: FORD 6610 Cab Tractor w/3,531 Hours; FORD 3000; Farmall 140 w/Snow Blade; Farmall Super "A". **FORKLIFT:** John's BN-Turn Around Forklift. **FARM IMPLEMENTS:** JD 1008 Offset Brush Chopper; FMC Orchard Sprayer w/500 Gal. Metal Tank; Ford 2 Bottom Plow; Dettson 2084 Snow Blower Attachment; Brillion Seeder; Vicon Spreader; 10 Ft. Field Drag; Edwards 3 Wheel Pruning Tower; JD 11 Ft. Transport Disk; Wood Apple Boxes. **TRAILERS:** Aluma-Lite 5' X 10' Single Axle Trailer; Cornelius 6-1/2' X 16' Tandem Axle Trailer; Steel Bed Farm Trailer. **SHOP TOOLS:** Torch Set; Welder; Generator; 2-Ton Hoist "A" Frame; Table Saw; Nuts & Bolts. **PLAYHOUSE:** Art Scherer Shop Made Playhouse (4-1/2' X 8' X 8' Tall); Art Scherer Made Children Appliances; **OLD & COLLECTOR ITEMS:** Line of Walk Behind Farm Tools (Walking Plow, Seeder, Cultivator, Tiller, Etc.); Old Country Sleigh; Old Signs; Advertising Signs; Round Oak Duplex Stove; Woodsman Wood Burner.

Pre-View Fri. March 28 from 11 A.M. -1:00 P.M.

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Beverly Sue Stasiak

October 12, 1933 - March 12, 2025

Beverly Sue Stasiak, 91, passed away on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, Niles, Michigan.

Beverly was born on October 12, 1933 in Niles, Michigan to the late Lawton Austin and Edna (Goley) Austin.

Along with her parents, Beverly was preceded in death by her loving husband of many years, Stanley Stasiak; daughter, Kim Coleman; siblings, Betty Forrest, Barb Adam Masica, William Austin, and John Robert.

Left to cherish the memory of Beverly are her children, Billie Sue Demond, Patricia (Gary) McCaslin, and Robert Dickens; 6 grandchildren; several great grandchildren, and 2 great-great grandchildren.

Beverly lived a fulfilling life marked by the simple pleasures that brought her immense joy, from the soothing routine of cleaning and tending to her garden to relishing the winter sun as a snow bird in Florida.

Beverly's laughter often echoed in the bingo halls where she spent many afternoons, delighting in the companionship and thrill of the game. Beyond her hobbies, her love for her daughter Billie Sue was unparalleled. The special bond they shared was evident in their mutual devotion and the cherished moments spent together.

As we bid farewell to Beverly, we hold dear the memory of her spirited presence and industrious nature. Her life was a testament to the comfort found in everyday activities and the deep contentment of familial love.

In keeping with Beverly's wishes, there will be no services held at this time.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home.

Photos, condolences, and memories may be left for Beverly's family at www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com

Barbara Fisher

November 4, 1943 - March 11, 2025

Barbara Ann Bragg Fisher, 81, formerly of Dowagiac, of Meridianville, AL, passed away on Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

Barbara was born on November 4, 1943, to Rosa and Wiley Bragg in Huntsville, AL. She had four sisters, Peggy, Linda, Virginia and Rebecca.

Barbara was much more than a partner to her husband Jay Fisher. She was his best friend, his confidante, and the love of his life. To her son Terry, she was much more than a mother. She truly was a friend, someone who always had his back and inspired him to be a better man.

For five years, Barbara started fighting neuropathy. Then in November of 2024, she had a stroke, followed by seizures which she fought as hard as she could but couldn't overcome.

Let us focus on the love they shared and the incredible woman she was.

Barbara and Jay met over 65 years ago and from the moment he saw her, he knew she was someone extraordinary. She had this radiant smile and laugh that could light up the darkest room. She was kind, intelligent, and had a way of making everyone feel seen and valued. She made Jay feel like the luckiest man in the world, and every day was a gift.

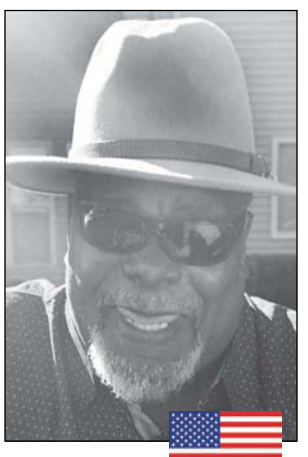
Their love was built on laughter, trust, and an unshakeable bond. Barbara was his rock, the person he turned to in every moment of struggle. She had this incredible ability to calm his fears and remind him of what truly mattered in life. She believed in him even when he didn't believe in himself, and pushed him to be a better person every single day.

Barbara was also his greatest adventure, whether they were traveling to new places, trying new recipes in the kitchen, or simply sitting on the couch talking and watching television. Every moment with her felt special to him. Even during her illness, Barbara never lost her spirit or her love for life. She fought not just for herself, but for their family, for their dreams, and for the life they had built together.

She showed him what true strength looked like and he will carry her courage with him forever. Barbara was his love, his everything. She was his heart, his home, and his greatest joy. He will forever miss her smile, her laugh, and the way she made him better just by being there. He knows she will always be with him - in the memories they had made, in the love they shared for 64 years.

Jay is thankful for her loving him, for her believing in him, and for being his partner in this life. He will always carry her in his heart. He loves her today, tomorrow, and forever. She was his soulmate, and may she rest in peace forever. Amen, Amen.

A service to celebrate Barbara's life will be held at 1:00pm on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at Clark Chapel - Starks Family Funeral Homes, 405 Center St, Dowagiac, where friends may visit with her family from 11:00am until the time of services. Pastor Stacey Wilder of Calvary Bible Church will officiate. Interment will follow in Riverside Cemetery, Dowagiac. Please visit Barbara's personalized webpage to share a memory or leave a condolence to her family at www.clarkch.com.



Elijah L. Harris, Sr.

May 26, 1956 - March 13, 2025

Elijah Lee Harris, Sr., 68, of Cassopolis, died Thursday, March 13, 2025.

His life began May 26, 1956 in Chicago, Illinois the oldest of eight born to Otis and Mattie Alexander.

Elijah cherished his momma, family, and friends. He was a people person through and through. He enjoyed helping people any possible way he could. He was a very smart man and had a vast depth of knowledge. He could talk to you for hours and will be remembered for his stories. He was an avid reader and enjoyed fishing. He loved the children of the community and would look for ways to invest in them. Elijah was passionate about comic books and shared that love with his grandchildren.

Elijah will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by his mother, Mattie Alexander of Cassopolis; daughter, Tamica (Renaldo Florence) Harris-Florence of Cassopolis; son, Elijah "EJ" (Casey) Harris, Jr. of Cassopolis; grandchildren, Braydin Collins, NeaMyah Harris-Florence, NaDyah Harris-Florence, NaRayah Harris-Florence, Renaldo Florence III, Lyonel Chandler, Lachlan Traylor, several chosen grandchildren; great granddaughter, Thea; sister, Patricia Harris-Curry of Cassopolis; brothers, Esaw (Marilyn) Harris of South Bend, Indiana, Gerald (Annabelle) Harris of Cassopolis, Richard (Teresa) Harris of Niles, Anthony Harris of Cassopolis, Otis (Doricia) Alexander of Elkhart, Indiana, Alfred Alexander of Cassopolis; and a host of nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father; his grandmother, Charlotte Harris; and one of his favorite aunts, Grace Howard.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, March 22, 2025 from 3:30 pm until time of service at 4:00 pm in the House of Prayer Church, 63563 Brick Church Road, Cassopolis, Michigan 49031.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

Mack Velthouse

July 27, 1959 - March 14, 2025

Mack "Bim" Lyon Velthouse, 65, of Centreville, passed away unexpectedly on Friday, March 14, 2025 at his residence.

The family will receive guests from 1:00 P.M. until the Celebration of Life Service at 2:00 P.M., Tuesday, March 25th, at First Christian Church, 201 Oak St., Dowagiac. Pastor Rick Romeo will officiate. Memorial contributions may be made to First Christian Church. Those wishing to leave an online condolence for the family may do so at www.clarkch.com.

See OBITUARIES, Page A7

PUBLIC NOTICE
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
2025 SOUTHWEST REGION HERBICIDE PROGRAM

The Michigan Department of Transportation hereby provides notice to the public, and property owners adjacent to state highways of the 2025 Herbicide Application Program treatments for roadside rights-of way within Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Branch Counties.

SCHEDULED DATES OF APPLICATION:
Applications will take place between April 1, 2025, and December 1, 2025.

HERBICIDES/LOCATIONS:
Non-Selective Applications: (guardrail, pavement/shoulder cracks and edges, barrier walls, concrete bridge slopes, invasive plants) ANY INDIVIDUAL OR COMBINATIONS OF THE HERBICIDES LISTED BELOW:
Roundup Pro Concentrate (Concentrate (Glyphosate), **Plateau** (Imazapic), **Milestone** (Aminopyralid), Escort XP (Metsulfuron Methyl), **Polaris** (Isopropylamine salt of Imazapyr), **Esplanade 200SC** (Indaziflam),
Method 240SL (Aminocyclopyrachlor), **Telar XP** (Chlorsulfuron) **Aquamaster/Roundup Custom** (Glyphosate).

Selective Applications: (broadleaf weeds in turf areas, brush control, plant growth regulator, invasive plants) ANY INDIVIDUAL OR COMBINATIONS OF THE HERBICIDES LISTED BELOW:
Milestone (Aminopyralid), **Escort XP** (Metsulfuron Methyl), **Garlon 4 Ultra** (Triclopyr-2-butoxyethylester), **Plateau** (Imazapic), **Method 240SL** (Aminocyclopyrachlor), **Vastlan** (Triclopyr choline, acetic acid, choline salt), **TerraVue** (Aminopyralid, Florpyrauxifen-Benzyl)

METHOD OF APPLICATION:
All applications will be ground or aerial applied by vehicular-mounted fixed boom or hand spray gun equipment. The herbicides will be tank-mixed or injected for each application.

RE-ENTRY RESTRICTIONS:
Do not enter treated areas until the spray has dried.

CONTACT:
All applications will be made by Certified Pesticide Applicators. For further information contact:

Rachael LeTourneau, Resource Analyst
Michigan Department of Transportation
1501 East Kilgore Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
269-303-2529

This notice is published per Regulation 637 Act No. 451, Public Acts of 1994, as amended.

CROSSWORD ANSWER
From Page 5

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SUDOKU ANSWER
From Page 5

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Niles-Buchanan NAACP chapter to host March meeting next week

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — The Niles-Buchanan branch of the NAACP will host its next meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 25 in the lower level of the Niles District Library, 620 E. Main St.

The meeting will feature speaker Karrah Herring, who was appointed by Governor Eric Holcomb in 2020 as Indiana's first Chief Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunity Officer. With 15 years of experience in higher education, corporate and state government, she is a public relations and workplace culture expert. Previously, she spent nearly a decade at the University of Notre Dame, leading workplace compliance, public affairs and strategic partnerships.

A Purdue and Valparaiso Law graduate, Herring is a sought-after speaker and global seminar leader. Her numerous accolades include Indiana Lawyer's 2024 Diversity in Law honor and IBJ Media's Indiana 250 Most Influential Business Leaders (2022-2024). She prioritizes faith, family, and service, striving to promote civility, empathy, and kindness.

Founded in 1909, the organization is an interracial endeavor striving to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. The NAACP Niles chapter began in March 1942 and had been a voice for human equality by addressing local issues through advocacy and communication, as well as sought to educate members and the public on history and current concerns. The chapter was revived last year following a six-year hiatus.

For more information on the NAACP and how to join, contact (269) 357-1151 or email nilesbuchanan-naacp@gmail.com.

FAIR

Continued from page A2

this year's fair.

"We try to do innovative things to help students understand how to look professional and how to prepare a resume right and talk to employers, so we had a lot of fun," she said. "Our honors program did something called Dress for Success, where they worked with (Helping Hands of Cass County). Helping Hands donated professional clothing and our honor students put on a show to show what to wear and what not to wear and then they spend a week selling clothes for a dollar apiece. That way, students have something to wear if they don't have professional clothes. The students think it's fun and then it also gets everybody kind of on board with what's happening."

MAXWELL HARDEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

GRAD

Continued from page A4

also reinforced my desire to help young children and families develop strategies to improve their chances of succeeding in life by way of better understanding factors contributing to personal and familial hardships, including better understanding generational, social and environmental factors impacting both physical and mental health outcomes. I also had a strong desire to break generational cycles within my own family."

Cosey commuted back and forth to campus, using Dial-a-Ride or walking when her car broke down.

"I was thankful for SMC being in Dowagiac, and I encourage everyone to take advantage of such a valuable academic and community resource.

"I have fond memories of SMC," she said. "There was no on-campus housing during the time I attended, however, I remember meeting students from all over the United States. I attended school dances, sporting events and was active in the Collegiate Organization for Minority Awareness. I also remember all the excitement on campus when (Vice President) Dan Quayle visited in 1992. I was influenced by professors such as Dr. Naomi Ludman and many others who helped expand my world view."

After graduating from SMC in 1994 with an associate in arts degree, her mother and family friends encouraged her to visit Andrews University in nearby Berrien Springs.

"I declined initially as Andrews was a private university and finances were an issue," Cosey said. "With the help of my associates, I later became employed at the Berrien County Juvenile Center, which was near Andrews."

"I decided to enroll in Andrews' social work program and attended while working fulltime. I was able to transfer several credits earned from SMC which helped tremendously. I went on to receive my bachelor's in social work and, later, my master's in social work degree in 2001."

From Andrews to Woodlands mental health therapist

In September 2001, Cosey was hired as a limited licensed mental health therapist at Woodlands. While at Woodlands, she completed all state requirements to become a fully-licensed mental health therapist (LMSW).

"As a mental health therapist, I provide therapy for children, adults and families who present with severe and persistent mental illness and/or co-occurring addiction concerns.

"As a community mental health provider, Woodlands serves individuals and families all throughout the Cass County area. As an outpatient therapist, I would meet with individuals on a weekly to bi-weekly basis for the purpose of providing clients with tools needed to handle life stressors in healthier and more effective ways," Cosey said.

In her current role, she supervises "a team of wonderful, empathetic and competent professionals and interns who work diligently to meet the needs of clients who look to Woodlands for support.

"I find it very rewarding to mentor new therapists, as well as help develop innovative ways in which to help support and enrich the lives of Cass County residents.

"In 2016-2017, I had the privilege of partnering with SMC and United way to start the college's first on-campus counseling program. I am so happy that the counseling program continues to support SMC students," she said. "Prior to partnering with SMC, I also had the privilege of partnering with Cass Family Clinic to initiate its integrated health care services. I'm also happy that Cass Family Clinic has expanded its integrated health care services."

Cosey chose to stay in Dowagiac "because it's a great place to live. I am very close to my family, who also live in Dowagiac and the surrounding area. My sister Danielle (Lucas) also graduated from SMC and just celebrated her 20-year work anniversary as SMC's financial aid analyst. My nephew, Deyonte, graduated from SMC and went on to graduate from the University of Michigan. My nephew, Donovan, recently returned from Florida, and is now enrolled and planning on completing his business degree at SMC. I have other family members and friends who have also benefited from attending Southwestern Michigan College."

"Family has always been my top priority," she said. I am a part of a big, beautiful, blended family. I was raised with four other siblings. I was born second in a sibship of five. I love spending time with my siblings, nieces and nephews, and think spending time with family has become so much more important to me, especially since the we lost my sister, Ronda, who passed away in 2023. I have a new puppy, Rue, who also keeps me on my toes.

"I wind down by reading, listening to music, attending church and taking long drives in my car. My family also started the Ronda Lucas Sullivan Legacy Foundation in my sister's name. This past year, we were successful in raising money to give away scholarships to two DUHS seniors. This has been most rewarding."

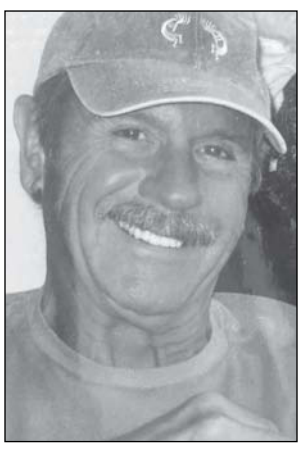
OBITUARIES

Continued from page A6

Mack was born July 27, 1959 in Dowagiac, MI and raised by his loving parents - Susan "Suzy" (Moon) Krueger and Jerry Krueger. He graduated from Marcellus High School and went on to serve as Military Police in the Army.

Mack will be missed by his parents - Suzy and Jerry Krueger; sister - Kelly (Donnie) Mack; 2 nieces - Heather (Brandon) Rigby and Jenna (Ben) Anderson; and grandnephews - Aaron Anderson, Seth Anderson, Anze Rigby and Ollie Rigby.

Mack will be remembered as a man of faith leading family prayer as well as, participating in the Men' s Fellowship Program at First Christian Church. Mack was a proud veteran and a hard working man. He loved his dogs and when not at his place of work, American Axel, his favorite times were spent with them and his family.



Peter Karl Wienke

April 23, 1944 - March 15, 2025

Peter Karl Wienke of Niles, Michigan passed away Saturday, March 15, 2025.

He was born April 23, 1944 in Niles, Michigan, one of two children born to Theodore and Phena Wienke.

Pete is survived by his sister Phoebe Wienke PhD of Cooper Harbor, Michigan; as well as his three children, Chris (Jessica), Jen, and David from Chicago and suburbs. He will also be dearly missed by his three grandchildren, Jack, Ryan and Blayke.

Pete was a passionate Michigan football fan and loved everything U of M. He was overjoyed with the Niles Football Team this past fall and wished he could have seen the games in person. Until this year, he was a fixture at Niles football games and wrestling meets. He enjoyed skiing, reading, and making passive aggressive jokes about all the Notre Dame people around here. He had a great sense of humor and hated being called Peter. He was a State Champion Wrestler at Niles High School in 1962, an All-Conference Football Player and an all-star on track. After thirty years of teaching physical education in the Northwest Suburbs of Chicago he retired back to Niles, Michigan where he always felt most at home. Pete will be dearly missed by all those who loved him.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, March 22, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, 615 East Main Street, Niles. Following the visitation, Pete will be laid to rest in Silverbrook Cemetery, Niles.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Pete be made to the Niles High School

Wrestling Program, 1441 Eagle Street, Niles, Michigan 49120.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritter-wickens.com.

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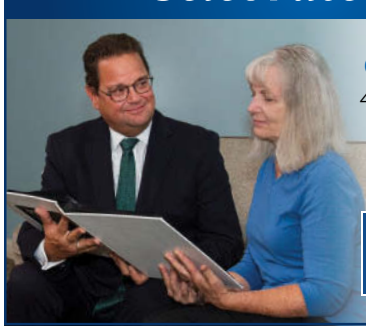
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MAXWELL HARDEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

MISSION

Continued from page A1

and worship.

For decades, services had been provided out of their previous building, a former church located at 424 N 15th St., Niles. Due to its age and condition however, the building became obsolete.

When new Corps Officers Majors Nic and Jodi Montgomery were appointed to the Niles Corps several years ago, they knew something had to be done, so they began working to reinvigorate a previous fundraising campaign. Thanks to several anonymous donors and foundations, they were finally able to reach their financial goal of $3.8 million in late 2023.

After months of working with the architects at Abonmarche, DJ Construction went to work on the project.

The ceremony featured remarks from Salvation Army in Niles Corps Officers Majors Nic & Jodi Montgomery, Arvin Delacruz from Abonmarche, Matt Schrock with DJ Construction and Kim French as well as musical numbers from the Salvation Army Band.

"The thing I love about building dedications is that they're not about the building," Jodi said. "They're about the places and spaces that are created for people to come and gather, worship, pray, laugh, cry, give, receive, to find hope and healing and most of all to be loved. That's what we want this place to be."

ROBO

Continued from page A1

don't get the support they deserve. They're competing at worlds and we want to help them get there."

Ting Tang Walla Walla Bing Bang members include Lukas Taggart, Dowagiac Middle School; Bennett Goebel, Berrien Springs Partnership Program; David Gearhart, Berrien Springs Virtual Academy; Tallula Kimmey, Berrien Springs Partnership Program; and Cashton Kimmey, Berrien Springs Partnership Program.

The team is excited to be able to compete on the world stage.

"It's definitely very exciting, especially when you see all the other teams that didn't qualify, or almost qualified," Tallula said.

MAXWELL HARDEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

"I'm very gracious," Cashton said. "I'm very proud of us this year. I feel like we're doing very well. I'm very proud of our team. I think it's very amazing."

The team, decked out in top hats and tuxedo T-shirts – an homage inspired by Witch Doctor on Discovery Channel's BattleBots – gave a presentation to Ladies Auxiliary members that included a demonstration of their robot in action. VEX competitions for middle school through college bring STEM skills to life by tasking teams of students with designing and building a robot to play against other teams in a strategic, game-based engineering challenge.

"I've always liked robotics, so I just like the robot part and I'm really competitive so I like competing too," Goebel said. "I like building robots and I did a lot of coding too."

"I like how it's organized because it's always random," Taggart said.

This season's challenge is "High Stakes," which pits red and blue alliances trying to stack 48 seven-inch donut-like rings — 24 of each color — on 10 stakes. With five mobile stakes, considerable strategy is involved in their placement, as well as coding it to climb a monkey-bars-like structure.

"I like the strategy that's involved," Gearhart added. "Strategizing with your teammates. You never know what robot they'll have or what they can do so that's pretty cool. I like building robots, too."

Robo Tech Zone is a community based nonprofit organization that facilitates competitive robotics teams. The program partners with local public, private, partnership programs and homeschools to offer Michiana students educational opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Students apply innovative STEM concepts to design, build, and code competitive robots. The team of RoboTZ coaches/mentors guide students through concepts of construction, coding, and the engineering process.

RoboTZ is subdivided into two middle school teams, Ting Tang Walla Walla Bing Bang and the Purple People Eaters; and two high school teams, Say Hello to My Little Friend and Neon Picklz. In addition to learning valuable design, construction, coding, and engineering skills, students will gain life skills such as teamwork, perseverance, self-confidence, respect, professionalism, leadership, communication, collaboration, strategic planning, project management, community outreach and critical thinking.

"These kids are here to do it," said Jojo Kimmey, who coaches the RoboTZ teams along with husband Chris Kimmey. "They don't come from privilege. It comes from passion and perseverance. We run into, like these teams across the state with big budgets and big schools that back them, and we're a non-profit. Everything's run by volunteers, donations, sponsors and community involvement. We roll into competitions and I tell them 'You can compete with the best. You've got the skill and the will, so they're taking it. I'm really proud of them."

Before the World Championships, the team will compete in the CREATE U.S. Open Championship robotics tournament this month. Readers interested in donating to RoboTZ can do so at robotechzone.org/donate. Readers interested in volunteering with RoboTZ can contact the Kimmeys at GoTeamRoboTZ@gmail.com.

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DRAMA

Continued from page A1

and band members have worked tirelessly to bring The Addams Family to life.

"Our full cast has 17 members playing the different roles of the family including some ancestors as our chorus," Persak said. "In addition to this we have a crew of seven dedicated kids backstage who are helping us with set pieces, props, lights, and sound. I'm really proud of the work we've all done to put this together."

Persak is looking forward to seeing her students' hard work pay off when the curtains rise Saturday night.

"The thing I've enjoyed most in this production is getting to work with these incredibly dedicated students," she said. "Productions like this are so much fun when everyone is working together to make it the best it can be. I'm so proud of them and of the show we've made together. It's been great to see new friendships forming among the cast and I really hope these experiences will stay with them like my own high school theater experiences stayed with me."

Niles Daily Star
Sports

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BASKETBALL

Hunt steps down

Longtime Dowagiac boys basketball coach resigns after 16 years

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

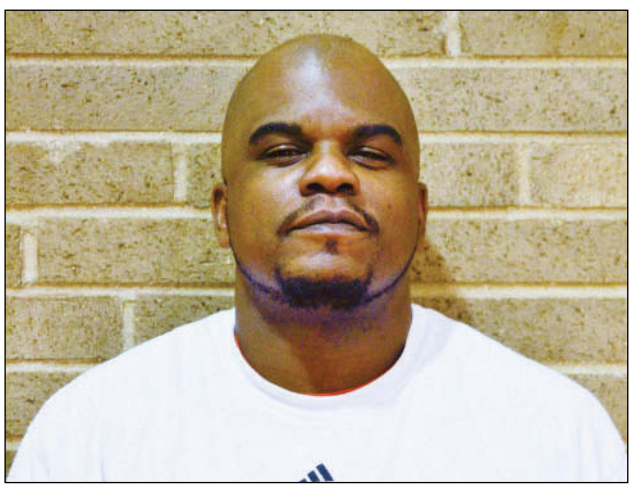
DOWAGIAC — For the first time in nearly two decades, Dowagiac High School will be searching for a new boys basketball head coach.

After 16 years at the helm and 23 with the program, Danum Hunt has resigned as Dowagiac boys basketball coach.

"Coach Hunt's influence extended beyond the court, positively impacting the lives of his players and the broader community," the school district stated in a release. "We appreciate his loyalty and contributions to Dowagiac Athletics and wish him continued success in his future coaching endeavors."

Hunt, a 1989 Benton Harbor graduate, was hired as the head coach in August 2009 after several years as an assistant. He replaced Greg Blomgren, who had taken the same position at St. Joseph High School before returning to the district as superintendent this year.

Under Hunt's leadership, the program achieved notable success, securing four conference championships, three district championships, one regional championship and the school's first Final Four appearance since 1984. The Chieftains finished 1-20 in 2024-25.



FILE | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

Hunt.

BASKETBALL

Four Eddies earn All-Wolverine honors

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

EDWARDSBURG — Four players from Edwardsburg's district championship boys basketball team earned Wolverine Conference honors.

Senior Brody Schimpa was selected as First Team All-Conference. Schimpa averaged 19 points, seven rebounds, three assists, and 2.8 steals per game. He shot 85.5 percent from the free throw line and an impressive 38 percent from 3-point range.

Conor Solarek was selected as Second Team All-Conference. Sollarek was the team's second-leading scorer, averaging eight points per game, and was the team's defensive specialist.

Matt Anders was also selected as Second Team All-Conference. He averaged 7.1 points and led the team by shooting 61 percent from the floor. Blaise Crist earned an All-Conference Honorable Mention selection, averaging seven points per game with 2.6 assists and shot nearly 72 percent from the free throw line.

BASKETBALL

A FIGHT TO THE END

Arbor Prep edges Brandywine 31-29 in D3 state semifinals

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

EAST LANSING — A historic season for the Brandywine girls basketball team ended in the state semifinals Thursday afternoon.

Ypsilanti Arbor Prep defeated Brandywine 31-29 at the Breslin Center. Arbor Prep junior Angela Meggisson made two free throws in the closing seconds to win it for the Gators. Arbor Prep advanced to face Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest Saturday in the D3 championship game.

The game was a rematch of last year's Division 3 championship game which saw the Gators beat the Bobcats 33-30.

Adeline Gill led the Bobcats (27-1) with 16 points and five rebounds and McKenna Price added six on two 3-pointers. Adellyn Drotoz and Lily Gill each had three points and Karleigh Byrd added one.

Meggisson led Arbor Prep (16-12) with 12 points and 11 rebounds and Eliza Bush had nine points while Jalaya Banks added five points and 13 rebounds. Brandywine led 17-9 at halftime.

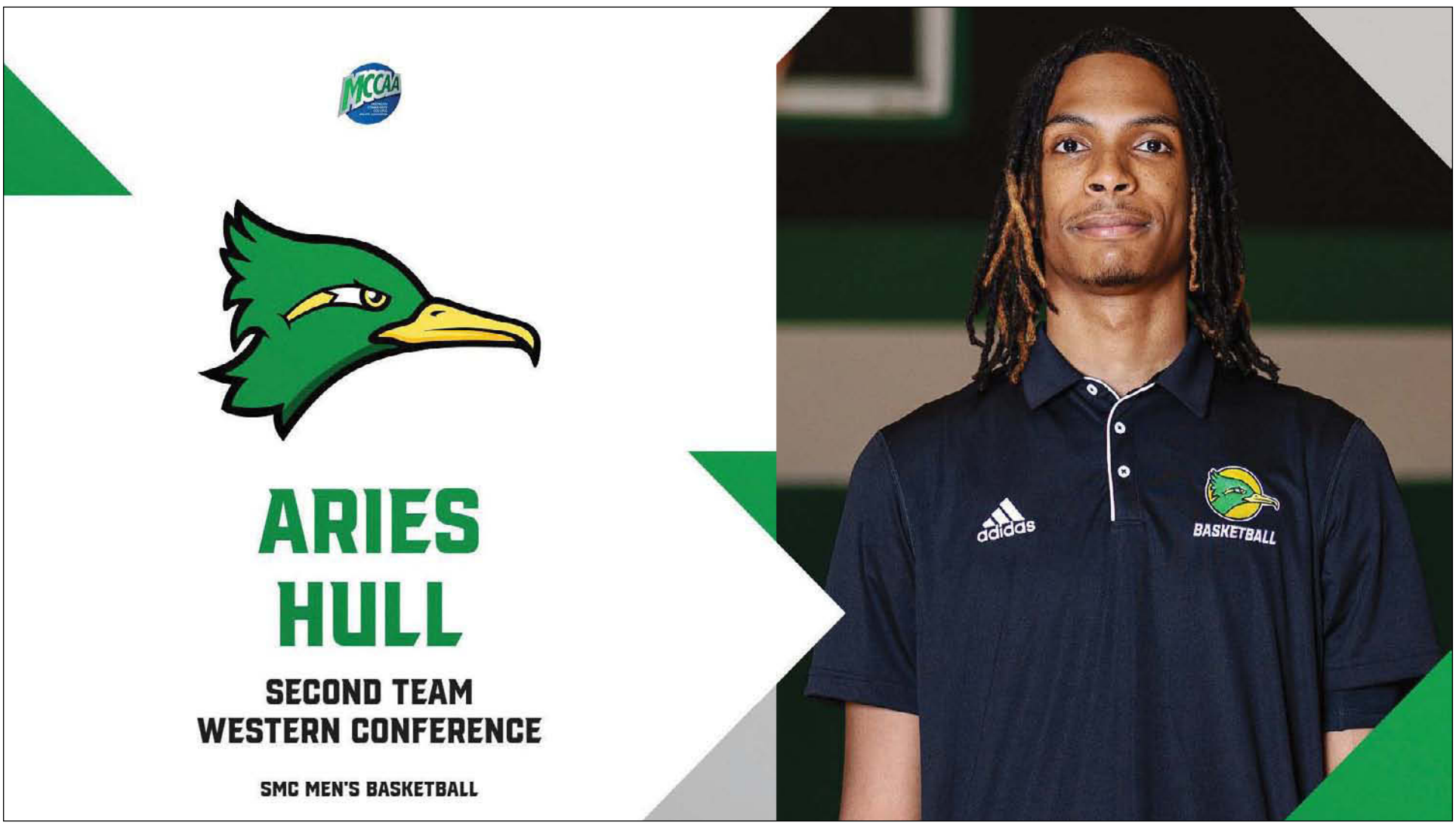
A full recap of the game can be found online at leaderpub.com.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TANYA HAGEN | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

NILES' WARD TAKES FOURTH AT USA WRESTLING JR. WARFARE NATIONALS

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

Niles senior Maddison Ward (third from left) competed in the USA Wrestling Jr. Warfare Nationals in Iowa last weekend. In one of the toughest Women's wrestling national tournaments outside of Fargo, North Dakota, with brackets loaded with U17 World Team members and Fargo Champs/All Americans, she was ranked 24th in the 155 bracket and took home fourth as a National finalist and earned All American status.



SMC men's hoops earns all-conference honors

COMMUNITY REPORT

DOWAGIAC — The MCCAA Western Conference honored four SMC Men's Basketball players in the end-of-season awards on Wednesday.

Sophomore Prince Adams was named to the All-Defensive Team and Honorable Mention, All-Conference for the MCCAA Western Conference. Adams holds all three SMC block records, and this season had 188 points, 177 rebounds, 39 assists and 20 steals.

Freshman Davion Goins also earned Honorable Mention, All-Conference for the West. Goins was the 2nd-leading scorer for the Roadrunners with 353 points, and also had 141 rebounds, 43 assists and 29 blocks in 29 games.

Sophomore Rodell Davis, Jr. was named Third Team, All-Conference. RJ is the SMC 3-point leader for game (9), season (69) and career (132). He is an impressive 40 percent 3-point shooter for his career.

Sophomore Aries Hull won Second Team, All-Conference in the West. AJ is the SMC record holder for multiple categories in points, rebounds, and free throws. He anchored the Roadrunners in 27 games, led the team with 487 points, pulled down 290 rebounds and double-doubled an incredible 18 times in the 2024-25 season.

The Men's Basketball Roadrunners have had three consecutive winning seasons since reviving the program in 2022 after a 26-year hiatus. In the 2024-25 campaign, SMC knocked off #2-ranked South Suburban on the road, breaking the Bulldogs' 65-game home win streak. They finished with an overall record of 16-13 and set 35 team and individual school records during the year.

SMC women's hoops earns all-conference honors

COMMUNITY REPORT

DOWAGIAC — The MCCAA Western Conference honored five SMC Women's Basketball players in the end-of-season awards on Wednesday.

Sophomore Amara Palmer was named to the All-Defensive Team for 2024-2025. She finished her SMC career with 146 steals, just one shy of the record held by Macey Laubach. Amara set the single-game block record with 4 and holds all three assist records (game, season, career).

Freshman Rayvan Rush was a part of the All-Freshman lineup and also earned Second Team, All-Conference in the West. Rush led SMC in scoring with 430 points, set a new single-game record for steals with 10 vs. Kennedy-King and won Western Conference Player of the Week earlier in the season.

Two Roadrunners were honored for the Western Conference Third Team this year. Freshman guards Maggie Weller and Olivia Robinson each played in all 31 games this season.

Weller holds the single season block record with 24 (revised), put in 278 points (2nd on the team), grabbed 147 rebounds and dished out 53 assists. Robinson started 26 of those 31 games, led the team in free throw percentage (79%) and had 62 steals.

Freshman Shiyah Forte joined Rush on the All-Conference Second Team. Forte was the third-leading scorer on the team with 256, shot and made the most free throws of any player and cleaned the glass with 208 rebounds, which ties alum Ariana Lemons for 2nd all-time for a season.

The Roadrunners' 2024-2025 season ended in the District Semifinals with a 21-10 overall record. SMC was 9-5 in the Western Conference and fiercely defended home court, going 13-2 in the Fieldhouse. This team set numerous school records along the way, including Team 2PT FG Made – Game (42), Team 3PT % - Game (61.5%), Team FT Made – Game (27), Team FT % - Game (27-30, 90.0%), Team Blocks – Game (6), Team Steals – Game (35) and Team Steals – Season (450).

NEWS

White Pigeon man gets 20+ years for home invasion, firearms charges

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications Contributor

CASSOPOLIS — An area resident caught on surveillance cameras stealing property from a Marcellus home was sentenced to prison Friday in Cass County Circuit Court.

Thomas James McDonald, 50, of White Pigeon, was convicted by a Cass County jury on Feb. 11 of four felony charges: larceny in a building, larceny of a firearm, first-degree home invasion and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

McDonald

He was sentenced to three to 20 years in prison on the home invasion charge, a consecutive two years in prison on the felony firearm charge and credit for time served, 35 days, on the two larceny charges. He must pay $2,812 in fines and costs and $1,500 in restitution.

The incident occurred Nov. 25, 2023 at a residence in Marcellus. The homeowner testified that she was packing items to move from the home and left for a short time. She later watched the surveillance camera footage and saw that someone had entered the home and taken a gun case and a painting.

McDonald was arrested after police posted the video on social meeting and people identified him.

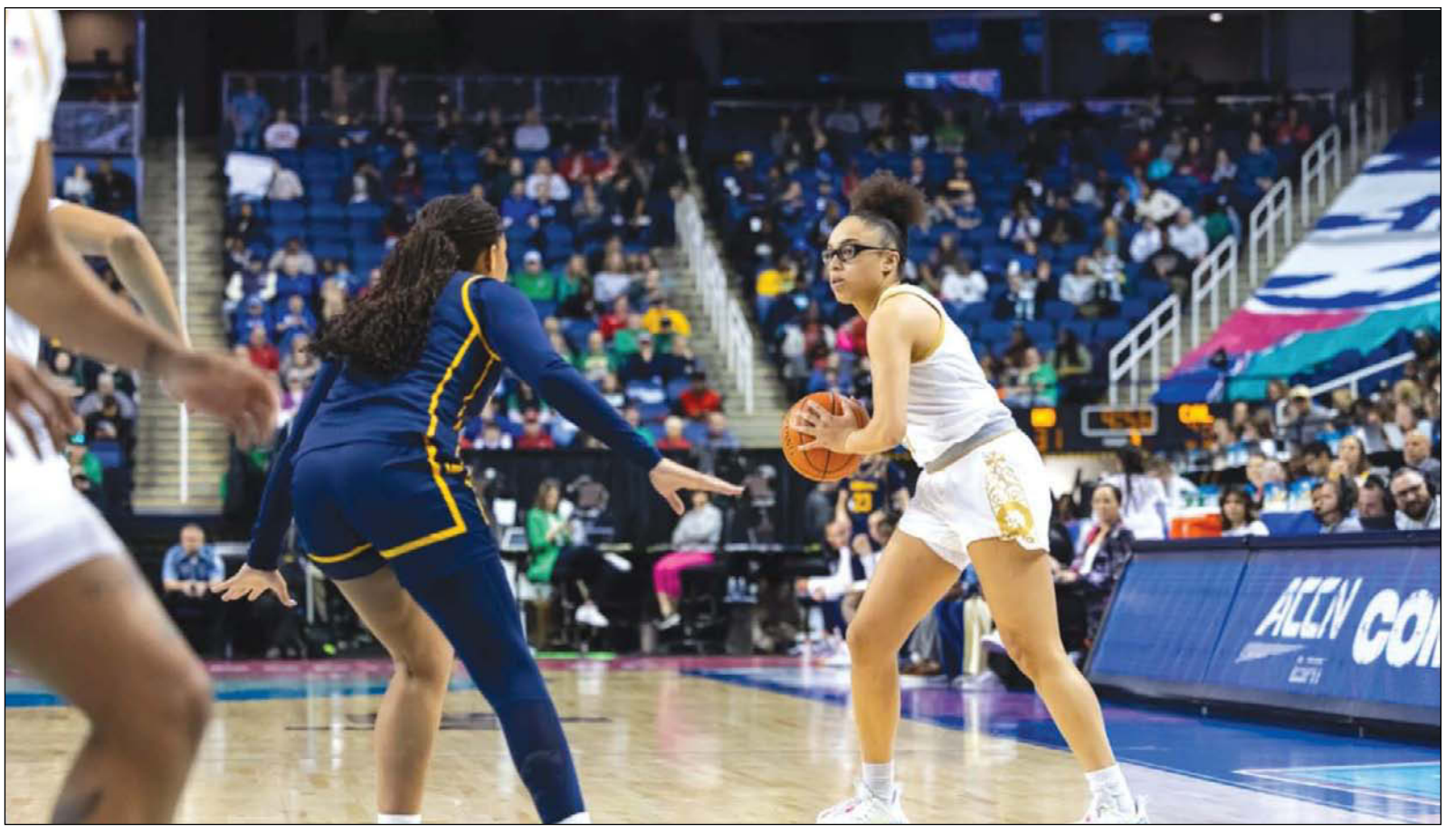
Cass County Assistant Prosecutor Jason Ronning noted that his office had offered McDonald a plea deal that would

See CHARGES, Page B3

BASKETBALL

Citron, Hidalgo, Miles earn AP, USBWA All-America Honors

COMMUNITY REPORT



SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — After a 26-5 regular season and earning the opportunity to host as a No. 3 seed in the NCAA Tournament, three Notre Dame guards have earned national recognition for their bodies of work this year.

On Wednesday, the Associated Press and U.S. Basketball Writers Association announced their annual awards. For the AP, Hannah Hidalgo was named to the First Team, Olivia Miles was named to the Second Team, and Sonia Citron earned Honorable Mention. For the USBWA, Hidalgo earned First Team recognition, while Miles was Second Team.

Hidalgo has now been named to the AP All-America First Team as a freshman and sophomore, becoming just the fourth player in history to do so and joining USC's JuJu Watkins, Connecticut's Maya Moore and Oklahoma's Courtney Paris.

Hidalgo is pacing the Irish this season on both ends of the court. She leads the team with 24.2 points and 3.7 steals per game, marks that both rank fourth in the nation. Hidalgo also ranks fourth in the ACC with a 40.7 success rate from beyond the arc and is averaging a pair of triples per game.

The 5-6 guard has already re-written portions of the Irish record book, too. At the ACC Tournament, Hidalgo joined Irish legend Arike Ogunbowale as the only players in Notre Dame history to post multiple 700-point seasons. She also has 108 steals this year, the sophomore record. It is just the fourth time in program history a Notre Dame player has had a 100-steal season. Hidalgo did it last year as well (160).

Miles is averaging 16.2 points, 5.9 rebounds and 5.8 assists per game. She is the only player in the nation averaging 15-5-5 while shooting greater than 40 percent from deep. In the last 15 years, Iowa's Caitlin Clark and Oregon's Sabrina Ionescu are the only other players to achieve that feat.

Additionally, Miles leads the nation with three triple-doubles this season and became the first player in ACC history with back-to-back triple-doubles (Loyola and Virginia). Her 20-point triple-double in Notre Dame's opener against Mercyhurst came on the heels of a year off while rehabbing a torn ACL, making her the first player in NBA, WNBA or college basketball player in history to sit out for a year due to injury and post a 20-point triple-double in their first game back.

Citron has quietly stuffed the stat sheet nearly every time she takes the floor this year. She is posting 13.8 points, 5.3 rebounds and 2.8 assists per game. In the last 10 games, those numbers jump to 15.2 points, 5.4 rebounds and 2.9 assists per game with a 57.5 percent success rate from the floor. She also has seven games this year with 3+ steals.

SMC Presents 'Shrek: The Musical'

COMMUNITY NEWS

SUBMITTED | LEADER PUBLICATIONS

DOWAGIAC – "Shrek" Director Andrew Fisher has his own backstory with Southwestern Michigan College's spring musical.

Fisher played Donkey in the spirit of Eddie Murphy's film rendition, while Matthew Hickok of Niles in his current 28-member cast takes the role in a "different direction" inspired by Looney Tunes.

Hickok, who earned a communications degree in 2024, performed as a student in the "Cabaret" and as Mr. Mushnik, the flower shop owner in "Little Shop of Horrors."

SMC stages the Tony-winning "Shrek: The Musical," which goes beyond retelling the familiar fairy tale in the Oscar-winning DreamWorks Animation film on March 20-22 at 7:30 p.m. and on March 23 at 2 p.m. in the theatre of the Dale A. Lyons Building on the Dowagiac campus.

"Shrek" tells the story of a swamp-dwelling ogre who goes on a life-changing adventure to reclaim the deed to his land. Joined by a wise-cracking donkey, this unlikely hero fights a fearsome dragon and rescues a feisty princess.

The beloved ogre will be portrayed right down to his Scottish accent by Trenton Smith of Portage.

Smith, a psychology major, first came to SMC for choir camp with his Portage Northern director, Dowagiac native and SMC alumna Chelsea Whiteoak.

"I did (Shrek) in eighth grade. I was Papa Bear and a Knight," said Smith, who played Audrey II in "Little Shop of Horrors" last March.

Feisty Princess Fiona will be played by Hartford's Jersey Baker.

Fisher's turn as Donkey came with the Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra at Shadowland Pavilion at Silver Beach in 2013.

"We rehearsed here," Fisher chuckled. "In fact, my old costume's in the costume room. I helped out with 'Godspell' (in 2022) and 'The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" (in 2023)."

Fisher was a lead in 2014's "Parade," in conjunction with a residency by its Tony-winning composer Jason Robert Brown.

Fisher majored in music and leads the Andrew Fisher Quartet, but became a father a few weeks ago and works in IT for Corewell Health, covering the Niles hospital and clinics in Niles, Dowagiac, New Buffalo, Cassopolis and Berrien Springs. He also teaches voice at Citadel Dance and Music Center in Benton Harbor.

Fisher's cast also includes: Brandon Maynard, Farquaad, King Harold, Knight; Da'Shonae Reeves, Dragon; Ryan Skinner, Pinocchio, Knight; Sarah Skinner, Sugar Plum Fairy, Gingy, Duloc Dancer, Vermin, Queen Lillian; Mel Weber, Thelonius, Papa Ogre, Papa Bear, Knight; Grace Bruntz, Mama Ogre, Mama Bear, Blue Bird, Duloc Dancer, Blind Mouse; Aria Kruzel, Baby Bear, Bunny; Arianna Rhynard, Pig; Cheyenne Rodriguez, Captain of the Guard, Duloc Dancer, Villager, Pied Piper, Antelope; David Marloe, Bishop, Villager, Guard; Elanor Bussler, Young Fiona, White Rabbit; Elijah Skinner, Big Bad Wolf, Duloc Greeter; Finn Skinner, Villager, Guard; Grace Phillips, Teen Fiona, Fairy Godmother, Duloc Dancer, Vermin; Hailey Amster, Elf, Blind Mouse; Jessica Flagel, Pig, Knight; Jude Skinner, Puss in Boots, Villager, Guard; Keely Williamson, Humpty Dumpty, Duloc Dancer, Vermin; Kendra Briley, Villager, Cow, Guard; Lauren Lovell, Peter Pan; Norah Skinner, Villager, Spoon, Guard, Witch; Simon Bussler, Little Ogre, Dwarf; Stephanie Pollard, Blind Mouse, Duloc Dancer, Pig, Vermin; Taryn Skinner, Guard, Duloc Dancer, Vermin, Villager; and Taylor Swank, Duloc Dancer, Vermin, Ugly Duckling.

Assisting Fisher are: Music Director David Carew; Pit Director Mark Hollandsworth; Choreographer Liz Baumann; Technical Director/Lighting Designer, Dakota Fontes; Rehearsal Coach/Collaborative Pianist Christine Seitz; Assistant Director/Stage Manager Tammy Mammel; Costume Designer Megan Laine; Set Designer John Tinker, whose construction trades students built a revolving set depicting four scenes; and Assistant Stage Manager Sarah Bussler.

Hollandsworth's pit orchestra includes: Christine Seitz and Melissa Prestine, keyboards; Kenneth Creameans, bass; Chris Chapman and Dustin Lowe, guitars; Joe Trojan, drums/percussion; Danny Lopez, trumpet; DeLain Bomer, horn; Aliya Leavitt, trombone; and Elisabeth Waldbauer and Mark Alvarez, reeds.

Eli Welch, Michael Cheevers, Brandon Parsons, DJ McConnell and Camila Pereznegron were in charge of set design/production, with a stage crew of Levi Morey and Steve Mammel.

To buy tickets, visit swmich.edu/performance.

CHARGES

Continued from page B2

have kept him out of prison but McDonald refused and the case went to trial. Ronning said he was concerned that McDonald refused to take responsibility and that a gun is now loose in the community.

Defense attorney Greg Feldman said that McDonald maintains his innocence and plans to appeal. McDonald continued to say that there was no evidence of him actually taking a gun, just a gun case.

Cass County Circuit Court Judge Mark Herman said that this was McDonald's first felony convictions and that people said this seemed to be out of character for him. "Regardless of the reasons why this happened, there's no doubt that you were the individual in the video carrying two items," he said.

"I'm concerned that the crux of the letter you sent me doesn't express remorse, only that there was no gun, just a case and that items were on the porch ready to be thrown out," the judge added. "The testimony was that there was a gun in the gun case and the jury believed the testimony of the victim."

Combs

"When people use drugs they do things that are out of character," he said. "That doesn't excuse or justify your actions ... I don't see remorse here, only concern that there was no gun seen."

Another area resident who was involved in an unarmed robbery in Marcellus was sentenced to jail and probation.

Justin Michael Combs, 34, of Marcellus, pleaded guilty to unarmed robbery and was sentenced to three years probation, 365 days in jail with credit for 202 days served and $2,128 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Aug. 10 in Volinia Township. Judge Herman reported that the victim went to residence to talk to an ex-girlfriend and was confronted by Combs and others who pulled a gun and stole the car.

"You are 34 years old and completed a probation for meth and gun charges last year," Judge Herman said. "You can see where messing with drugs will get you. Don't be surprised if someone shoots at you next time. The one year agreement in this case doesn't keep you from going to prison if you violate your probation."

In other sentencings:

Burt

• Lydell Burt, 34, of Joy Drive in Dowagiac, pleaded guilty to second offense drunk driving and was sentenced to 18 months probation, credit for five days served and $1,665 in fines and costs. The incident occurred July 13 when his car went off the road in Howard Township.

Fry

• Tyler Ray Fry, 35, of White Pigeon, pleaded guilty to second offense domestic violence and was sentenced to 18 months probation, credit for 30 days served and $2,015 in fines and costs. The incident involving an assault on a woman occurred Feb. 5, 2023 in Edwardsburg.

• Mark Wade Lehman, 54, of Union, pleaded guilty to reckless driving and use of meth and was sentenced to 12 months probation, credit for 97 days served and $1,975 in fines and costs. The incident occurred Nov. 23 when he fled police and went through the roundabout at Five Corners on U.S. 12.

Lehman

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Miscellaneous For Sale

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Miscellaneous Services

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Public Notices

Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

Auctioning off a few abandoned cars on Thursday, March 27th, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at RB Towing 68686 M 62, Edwardsburg, MI 49112

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2024
ABANDONED VEHICLES

PUBLIC NOTICE

Scarlett Towing is having an abandoned vehicle auction. Auction date 3/31/25 @ 8:00 am Vehicle up for auction 2000 Ford F 150 Vin:1FTZX1728YKB10004 Vehicle unknown running condition and miles Location: 7979 Deans Hill Rd, Berrien Center

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2024
AV/00 FORD

Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF SELF STORAGE SALE

Please take notice Aloha Storage located at 3001 South 11th Street Niles MI 49120 intends to hold an auction of storage units in default of payment. The sale will occur at the facility on 4/4/2025 at 12:00PM. Unless otherwise stated in the below list of Unit #'s the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Unit #I40A. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice.

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 15 and 22, 2025
L2L-57041

PUBLIC NOTICE

The March 13, 2025, Bertrand Charter Township Regular Board Meeting draft minutes have been posted at the Bertrand Charter Township Hall, 3835 Buffalo Road, Buchanan, MI 49107 and on the township website (bertrandtwpmi.gov). Polly White, Clerk Bertrand Charter Township

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2025
MINUTES

PUBLIC NOTICE

SYNOPSIS OF THE MINUTES OF THE ONTWA TOWNSHIP PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MONDAY MARCH 10, 2025

The Public Hearing to review the township budget for FY 2025-2026 was called to order at 6:30pm, by Supervisor Christensen.
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll call
Approval of the Agenda
Public Comment: No public comment.
New Business: General Appropriations Resolution, Budget, Resolution for salaries for elected officials, proposed salaries for Ontwa township employees, Budget narrative, approval of other township budgets
Public Comment: no public comment
Meeting Adjourned 6:56pm
Minutes of the open hearing may be found on the Township website: www.ontwatwp.org
Respectfully submitted by Tina VanBelle, Ontwa Township Clerk
Approved for Publication by Supervisor Meryl Christensen

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2025
SYNOPSIS 03.10.25

PUBLIC NOTICE

Economy Storage, 2206 Yankee Street, Niles, MI 49120. Auction Saturday March 29, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Unit #	Name
10	Charmin Kelly
56	Nathan Thomas
67	Jerome Jankowiak
95	Tera Jameson
114	Tellie Doan
116	Melissa Kaeding
148	Gloster Johnson
183	Cindy Fisher
184/66	Mary Anderson
191	Alan Smith
228/367	Shawnette Booker
240	Teyshawn Wallace
258	Briana Coon
273	Tony Pompey
278	Chelsie Carlyle
320/129	Eric Vinnedge
330	Sheila Kollers
331	Valerie Outlaw
342	Terrence Moss
346	DaMonica Williams
352	Andre Ahlers
361	Andrew Wiese
368	Erin Weed
375	Jenna Shirrell
379	Bobbie Helms
389	Parnell Jenkins
390	Larry Hungerford
399	Les Hart
412	Tyler Ballard
427/428	McCade Reese
430	Reshawn Preston
459	Jethrow Kyles
486	Leigh Anne Norris
541	Nicole Hurt
605	Michael Lewark
608	Robert Conner
624	Norman Moody
628/499	Altavious Stone
661/665	Rodney Prescott
677/567	Julie Potate

Niles U-Stor-It, 1314 E. Main Street, Niles, MI 49120. Auction Saturday March 29,2025 at 10:30 a.m.

35	Tyler Cameron
49	Miranda Wendzel
57	Nathan Haynes

J & J Storage, 2220 S. 13th Street and 2627 S. 11th Street, Niles, MI 49120. Auction Saturday March 29, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

97	Blake King
99	Kim Streer
170A	Mellisa Visel
179A	Tyler Vanlaecke
189A	Erica Cutter
199A/88	Nick Gigliotti
102	Erin Linley
136	Jennifer Harrison
140	Ronnie West
168	Jerol Williams Jr.
227	Jennifer Nichols
238/466	James Diss
242	Wanda Burnett
251	Caley Alvord
262	Brittany Backus
263	Tamara Holmes
277	K.C. Hiatt
288	Donna Waldron
292	The Woodshed Crafts
301	Rebecca Nichols
319	Jeannie Barsodi
327	Robert Davis
355	Carson Bowlin
373	Rhonda Sue Outlaw
380	Leatha Lennox
420	Michelle Boyce
426	James Schilling Jr.

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 15 and 22, 2025
STORAGE AUCTION

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Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

SYNOPSIS OF THE MINUTES OF THE ONTWA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONDAY MARCH 10, 2025

The regular meeting of the Ontwa Township Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:00pm.
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll call
Approval of the Agenda
Public Comment: No public comment.
Approval of Consent Agenda
Commissioner's Report: Commissioner Marchetti
Committee Board Reports: No reports this month.
New Business: Resolution to Establish Regular Meeting Dates with a change to begin at 6pm, Resolution to Adopt Annual Health Insurance Act, Resolution to Appoint Professional Service Providers, Burnham & Flowers Insurance, Cemetery
Old Business: Update on the Elkhart Road Project
Schedule of Township meetings: Board of Trustees April 14th, 2025, Police Board March 19th, Wastewater Board March 26th , Planning Commission April 2nd, Ambulance Board March 12th, Fire Board April 1st. Ontwa Township Cleanup Day April 19th 9am-2pm.
Note that all Board of Trustees meetings will commence at 6:00m beginning April 14th.
Meeting Adjourned 7:47pm
Minutes of Board of Trustee meetings may be found on the Township website: www.ontwatwp.org
Respectfully submitted by Tina VanBelle, Ontwa Township Clerk
Approved for Publication by Supervisor Meryl Christensen

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2025
SYNOPSIS 2 03.10.25

Legal Notices

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT BERRIEN COUNTY NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE CASE NO. and JUDGE 2024-1086-DE-J Paul S. Jancha (P72978)

Court address 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, Michigan 49086
Court telephone No. 269-983-7111

Estate of Carolyn Esther Douglass
Date of birth: 08/19/1941
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Carolyn Esther Douglass, died January 10, 2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Paul Andrew Douglass, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street St. Joseph and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

03/18/25

Thomas J. Walz P79360
509 W. Washington Street South Bend, IN 46601 574-232-5988

Paul Andrew Douglass
1820 Briar Raod Niles, MI 49120 574-993-0891

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2025
EST/DOUGLAS, C.

Legal Notices

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT OF BERRIEN COUNTY NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE CASE NO 2024-0675-DE-G AND JUDGE HON. MABEL JOHNSON MAYFIELD COURT ADDRESS 811 PORT STREET, FLOOR 4. ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085 269-983-7111

Estate of Donald D. Steven, Deceased Date of Birth Febrruary 8, 1927

TO ALL CREDITORS:
The decedent, Donald D. Steven, died on January 18, 2024,
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Mark Steven, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street, Floor 4, St. Joseph, MI 49085 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 22, 2025

Mark Steven 33110 Pokagon Highway Niles, MI 49120
269-240-8734

James J. Mollison, P17884, 4 South Lincoln Avenue, Niles, MI 49120, 269-684-7600

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2025
EST/STEVEN, D.

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT OF BERRIEN COUNTY NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE CASE NO. 2025-0138-DE-R

Estate of Sandra Sue Wood
Date of Birth 06.16.1949
TO ALL CREDITORS:**
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The Decedent, Sandra Sue Wood, died 11.30.2024
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Shelley Milewski, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street, 4th Floor St. Joseph, MI 49085 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Shelley Milewski
321 Roberts St.
Niles, MI 49120 269-357-9174

Nicholas R. Hogue (P81291)
107 Pennsylvania Ave. Dowagiac, MI 49047 (269) 782-9895

Niles Daily Star:
Mar. 22, 2025
EST/WOOD, S.

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

RE: THE ROBERT A. KNOLL & MARY JEAN KNOLL REVOCABLE (NOW IRREVOCABLE) TRUST DATED NOVEMBER 14, 1997

SURVIVING SETTLOR: MARY JEAN KNOLL
=DATE OF DEATH: MARCH 4, 2025
=DATE OF BIRTH: NOVEMBER 10, 1927
EIN# 33-6857797

SUCCESSOR TRUSTEE: ANN M. KNOLL

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The surviving Settlor of the above trust, MARY JEAN KNOLL, died March 4, 2025; she resided at 1407 Hickory Street, Niles, Michigan 49120, in the City of Niles, Berrien County, Michigan. Her late husband, ROBERT A. KNOLL died more than 3 years ago. Creditors of MARY JEAN KNOLL, Deceased and the above trust are notified that all claims against MARY JEAN KNOLL, individually and the above trust will be forever barred unless presented to ANN M. KNOLL, Successor Trustee of the Trust, or to Mollison Law Offices, P. C., whose respective addresses are listed below, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice. No probate estate is necessary.

Date: March 22, 2025

Ann M. Knoll
Successor Trustee
18090 Cloverleaf Drive N.
South Bend, IN 46637
C-574-274-0816

James J. Mollison (P17884)
Mollison Law Offices, P.C.
Attorneys for Trustee
4 South Lincoln Ave.
Niles, MI 49120
269-684-7600
C 269-930-4170

Niles Daily Star: Mar. 22, 2025
TRUST/KNOLL

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